

A STUDY OF SELF ESTEEM AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ADJUSTMENT OF ORPHAN AGE-REARED, SINGLE PARENT FAMILY-REARED AND INTACT FAMILY-REARED ADOLESCENTS

RASHMI UPRETI¹ & SEEMA SHARMA²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Human Development & Family Studies, PAU, Ludhiana, Punjab, India

²Senior Extension Specialist, Department of Human Development & Family Studies, PAU, Ludhiana, Punjab, India

ABSTRACT

The present study assessed and compared the self-esteem of adolescents in orphanages, singleparent families, and intact families. The relationship between self-esteem and adolescent adjustment was also examined. The sample consisted of 300 adolescents in the age group of 14-16 years, from the four selected cities of Punjab (Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Patiala, and Hoshiarpur). Out of the 300 respondents, 100 school going adolescents were randomly picked from the selected orphanages and rest 200 adolescents were selected from the government schools (From intact families=100 adolescents and from single parent families=100 adolescents). The sample was equally distributed across both the genders (Boys=50 and Girls=50). The study findings concluded that as such no significant difference was observed in the self -esteem of adolescents living in orphanages, single- parent families, and intact families. A significant positive correlation between overall self- esteem and adjustment was reported only by the boys of single-parent families. In order to boost the self -esteem of adolescents, parents/caretakers should set boundaries for adolescents and expect them to follow rules; parents/caretakers should be generous with praise with the child; they should encourage the child for involvement in extra-curricular activities and be extremely friendly with them for understanding them better.

KEYWORDS: General Self, Home Parents, School Academic, Social, Self Peer & Teenagers

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a period of discovering one's real self. Self-esteem is one of the basic needs of all individuals, especially in adolescence. In the "Maslow's hierarchy of needs" self-esteem is in the fourth position along with the need for achievement, competence, independence, and respect (Myers, 2013). Self -esteem is defined as the attitude of approval which indicates the extent to which an individual believes how capable, successful, significant and worthy he is. In short, self-esteem is a personal judgment on the worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes the individual holds towards himself (Cooper Smith, 1967). Having high self-esteem makes an individual feel good about him/her. Higher self -esteem among adolescents strengthens their ability to cope with the challenges and negative situations. This enables them to live in such a world in which people value as well as respect them. Whereas, low self-esteem has a negative impact on moods (cause depression, anxiety, anger, hostility), thoughts (leads to self-deprecation, negative or low expectations), relationships (created is trust, avoidance) and goals (develop low expectations, fear of change)

The adjustment is the behavioral process that makes a balance with the conflicting need, or needs against obstacles in the environment. It is a process of change and searches by an individual for some level of balance or acceptance with the environment, others, or oneself (Dhyani and Singh, 2013). Charles Darwin has coined the idea of adjustment. He suggested that adjustment and natural selection are the roots of evolution. Those who can adjust successfully are the only survivors. A man has an immense capacity to adapt to new situations and also, bears and adjusts to social pressure and expectations of the society.

The family is one of the effective institutions that guide children in their development, socialization and integration (Yavuzer, 2001). The intact family where children live with both parents alive and living together is considered to be one of the main socializing institutions of the society. Those families in which either the father or mother is absent because of some accident, disease, marital separation, divorce, or death are considered to be single-parent families. Children's social, religious, educational and economic needs are satisfied by their parents. But every child is not so fortunate to have parents and is known as an orphan. Orphans become deprived of sympathetic-affectionate parental care and love. They start continuing their life with great challenges and usually live in an orphanage. An orphanage is a residential institution that is dedicated to the care of orphans and becomes one way of providing care, housing, and education to these children. Thus, the orphanage is a place that provides food, shelter, clothing, and warmth to orphans. Moreover, these homes also provide such children an opportunity to live in a stable family besides serving their medical needs.

Researchers suggested that the inherited genetic traits and the surrounding where the child lives, the kind of attitude and support he is getting from the parents or caregivers decide the personality of an individual and his capacity to adjust or survive in adverse condition. Therefore, the upbringing of the child in intact families, single-parent families or at orphanages may or may not alter the self-esteem of an individual and adjustment patterns.

A research reported that children living in orphanages had a lower degree of self-esteem than children living with their parents (Farooqi and Intezar, 2009). Whereas, one of the research findings depicted that the level of self-esteem of a student does not depend on the type of parenthood perse but also depend on a complex interaction of factors such as the type of relationship between parents and children, the school environment and teaching conditions (Kinga, 2014). Likewise, another study investigated the personality differences between institutionalized orphans, non-institutionalized orphans and non-orphans, and also revealed that no significant difference existed in self-esteem among the three groups (Majeed et al. 2014). Therefore, findings also suggested that the upbringing of the child in intact families, single-parent families or at orphanages may or may not alter the self-esteem of an individual. Moreover, in context with the relationship between adjustment and self-esteem, Manker (2011) found that the adjustment level of adolescents was highly associated with their self-esteem level; a competence that makes an adolescent enable to adjust adequately to the surroundings. Therefore, the available literature on adolescents indicates that researchers have devoted greater attention on self-esteem of adolescents residing only in intact families, but comparative studies related to self-esteem among adolescents residing with intact families, single parent families and at orphanages are very few. Also, very less number of studies emphasized the relationship between self-esteem and adjustment of adolescents. Based upon the understanding of these gaps this study was planned with the following objectives:

- To assess and compare the self-esteem of adolescents in orphanages, single-parent families, and intact families.

- To investigate the relationship between self -esteem and adjustment of adolescents in orphanages, single- parent families, and intact families.

METHODOLOGY

Locale

The present study comprised of adolescents who were drawn from orphanages and government schools of four cities of Punjab i.e. Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Patiala, and Hoshiarpur.

Study Participants

The sample of 100 school going adolescents in the age group of 14-16 years were randomly picked from the selected orphanages. Similarly, an equal number of respondents i.e. 100 adolescents were selected under both single-parent families and intact families from the government schools. The sample was equally distributed across both the genders (Boys=50 and Girls=50, in each category). Thus, the total sample for the present research study comprised of 300 school going adolescents ($n_1=100$ from orphanages and 200 from government schools, i.e. $n_2=100$ from single- parent families and $n_3=100$ from intact families) in the age group of 14-16 years.

Research Instruments

Self-Esteem Inventory (School Form) by Cooper Smith (1981)

The self-esteem of adolescents was assessed by using Cooper Smith Self Esteem Inventory (school form) developed by Cooper Smith (1981). It consisted of 4 subscales: General self, social self-peers, Home-parents, and School academic. The Home-parents subscale was modified for the adolescents from orphanages. Inventory had 58 items, out of which eight items constituted the lie scale. The lie scale items were scored separately and were not included in the final score. The four subscales of the scale i.e. General self, social self-peers, Home-parents, and School academic were scored separately. The subjects were asked to answer the items by marking any one of the two response options viz 'Like Me' or 'Unlike Me'. The scores were obtained by using the scoring keys. The total raw score obtained is multiplied by 2. The self-esteem scores were then assessed across the following three levels:

Table

S. No	Levels of Self-Esteem	Scores
1.	Low	0-33
2.	Medium	34-67
3.	High	68-100

The four subscales of the self-esteem inventory were scored and classified into three categories as given below:

S. No	Subscales	Items	Raw Scores	Interpretation
1.	General Self	26	26	0-8 (Low) 9-17 (Medium) 18-26 (High)
2.	Social Self-Peer	8	8	0-2 (Low) 3-5 (Medium) 6-8 (High)
3.	Home-Parents	8	8	0-2 (Low) 3-5 (Medium) 6-8 (High)

Table Contd.,				
4.	School-Academic	8	8	0-2 (Low) 3-5 (Medium) 6-8 (High)

Where,

- **General Self** means how adolescents feel about themselves.
- **Social Self-peer** means socially, how well they are accepted by their peer group.
- **Home-Parent** means how much they are being valued by their parents and siblings.
- **School-Academic** means how they perceive themselves in a school situation, their overall performance and relationship with teachers.

Bell's Adjustment Inventory Adapted by Ojha (2013)

This inventory was used to measure adjustment patterns of adolescents. It consisted of 140 items. The inventory measures adjustment in four different areas- Home, Health, Social and Emotional.

- The home dimension involves statements related to adjustment problems at home.
- Health dimension involves statements related to the adjustment problems related to health of adolescents.
- Social dimension involves statements related to social adjustment problems of adolescents.
- Emotional dimension involves statements related to emotional adjustment problems of adolescents.

35 statements were included in each area. Responses were recorded in the form of "Yes" and "No". For the interpretation, the numbers of responses where the individual has "Yes" only were counted. For each "Yes" responses 1 score was given. Whereas for each "No" responses 0 scores were given. The total number of "Yes" scores thus made total score of the individual on the part. The inventory was totally negative inventory. Therefore, only "Yes" responses were scored to measure adjustment difficulty. The adjustment patterns of adolescents from single-parent families and intact families in terms of categories were classified as follows:

Table

Interpretation	Range of Scores				
	Home	Health	Social	Emotional	Total
Low	15 and above	10 and above	17 and above	12 and above	94-140
Medium	8-14	5-9	10-16	5-11	47-93
High	7 and below	4 and below	9 and below	4 and below	0-46

The home aspect of the inventory was modified for the adolescents from single-parent families and from orphanages. The adjustment patterns of adolescents from orphanages in terms of categories were classified as follows:

Table

Interpretation	Range of Scores			
	Health	Social	Emotional	Total
Low	10 and above	17 and above	12 and above	70-105
Medium	5-9	10-16	5-11	35-69
High	4 and below	9 and below	4 and below	0-34

Data Collection Procedures

The investigator approached the Principal or Head of the selected government schools and orphanages through a letter of request from the Department which clarified the purpose of the study. After the permission for the study was granted, respondents were approached directly at schools and orphanages itself. Firstly, the purpose of the study was made clear to them and then they were requested to give honest responses. Groups of 10 students were taken at a time and questionnaires were given to each student every time. Then, they were asked to fill it under the supervision of the researcher. All the mandatory instructions about how to fill questionnaires were given to them before distributing questionnaires. They were assured that their identity would not be revealed and information provided by them would be kept confidential and would be used only for research purpose.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed by using frequency, percentage, one-way Anova and correlation analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1(a) elucidates that general self- esteem of the adolescents in orphanages, single- parent families and intact families were found to be on the medium level (66.00%, 67.00% and 60.00% respectively). It was surprising to note that orphans were proportionally more than the adolescents from intact families at the medium level. In contrary to that, more adolescents from intact families (39.00%) as compared to orphans (34.00%) and adolescents from single- parent families (32.00%) showed a high level of self- esteem. This implies that the majority of adolescents from single- parent families and from orphanages in almost equal percentage reported the medium level of general self- esteem, whereas the population of adolescents from intact families was comparatively low.

With respect to the self -esteem among the peer groups, the majority was found under medium level. Out of which, interestingly orphans were more in numbers (69.00%) as compared to adolescents from single- parent families (63.00%) and intact families (61.00%). Whereas, 32 percent of adolescents living with both the parents, 28 percent who were living with singleparent families and 23 percent from orphanages were clustered under high level of selfesteem. Findings summarized that more percentage of orphans reported the medium level of selfesteem under the “social self-peer” dimension as compared to their counterparts.

An exactly equal percentage was shared by the respondents living in intact families and single parent families (54.00%), who reported a high level of self- esteem at home or in front of parents. However, at a medium level, more numbers of adolescents from intact families were clustered (40.00%). The analysis suggested that more than half of the adolescents from both types of families had a high level of self- esteem at home or in front of parents, proportionally no difference was found.

It was noteworthy to observe that maximum number of adolescents irrespective of their family type showed a high level of self- esteem at school. They share almost equal percentage, i.e. orphans and adolescents living with both the parents shared 67.00 percent equally. While adolescents living with single- parent were 68 in numbers. Also, at medium level slight difference was observed. Among all, single- parent families’ adolescents in more proportion (31.00%) reported the medium level of self- esteem as compared to intact families adolescents’ (27.00%) and orphans (24.00%). These findings draw a conclusion that nearly 70 percent of the adolescents reported a high level of self- esteem at school, not

much difference was observed in all the three groups.

Table 1 (a): Percent Distribution of the Adolescents across Different Dimensions of Self Esteem

Dimensions of Self Esteem	Levels	Adolescents (n=300)					
		Orphanages (n ₁ =100)		Single Parent Families (n ₂ =100)		Intact Families (n ₃ =100)	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
General	Low	0	0.00	1	1.00	1	1.00
	Medium	66	66.00	67	67.00	60	60.00
	High	34	34.00	32	32.00	39	39.00
Social Self-Peer	Low	8	8.00	9	9.00	7	7.00
	Medium	69	69.00	63	63.00	61	61.00
	High	23	23.00	28	28.00	32	32.00
Home-Parents	Low	-	-	8	8.00	6	6.00
	Medium	-	-	38	38.00	40	40.00
	High	-	-	54	54.00	54	54.00
School-Academic	Low	9	9.00	1	1.00	6	6.00
	Medium	24	24.00	31	31.00	27	27.00
	High	67	67.00	68	68.00	67	67.00
Total	Low	1	1.00	1	1.00	0	0.00
	Medium	94	94.00	57	57.00	45	45.00
	High	5	5.00	42	42.00	55	55.00

The distribution pattern of total self -esteems depicted that almost all the orphans (94.00%) showed the medium level of self esteem, only 5 percent had a high level of self- esteem. Whereas, 57 percent and 45 percent of respondents in single- parent families and in orphanages reported the medium level of self esteem. However, at a high level of self esteem adolescents from intact families were comparatively more (55.00%) than those from single parent families (42.00%). Thus, it could be concluded that almost all the orphans had a medium level of self -esteem; those from single- parent families and intact families had a medium as well as high level of self- esteem.

The data presented in table 1(b) elucidates the difference in the mean scores of adolescents across different dimensions of self esteem. In all the dimensions of self esteem, statistically, no significant differences were observed in the mean scores of adolescents living in the orphanages, single parent families and intact families. Research findings also depicts that the level of self-esteem of a student does not depend on the type of parenthood per se but on a complex interaction of other factors such as the type of relationship between parents and children, the school environment and teaching conditions among others (Kinga, 2014).

Likewise, another study aimed at investigating the personality differences between institutionalized orphans, non institutionalized orphans and non orphans, also revealed no significant difference in self -esteem among the three groups (Majeed et al. 2014). As said earlier that self-esteem also depends upon the complex interaction of type of relationship between parents, and children, the school environment and teaching conditions, therefore, it might be possible that even living in orphanage did not make any significant difference in the self- esteem of orphans when compared with other counterparts.

However, the pattern of mean score mentioned in table 1 (b), represents that the adolescents from intact families (mean=17.12) had better general self -esteem, followed by adolescents living in orphanages (mean=16.51) and single-parent families (mean=16.09). The adolescents from orphanages (mean= 4.66) and those from intact families (mean=4.65) depicted an almost equal level of self- esteem in front of their peer groups and adolescents from single- parent families had

comparatively low self esteem (mean=4.49). While those adolescents who were living with both the parents (mean=5.42) showed the better self esteem in front of parents/at home than those who were living with single -parent (mean=5.40). Under the school academic dimension, lowest self -esteem was associated with orphans (mean=5.87) and highest with the adolescents from single -parent families (mean=6.04), while, adolescents living with intact families also showed self esteem nearly equal to those living in single parent families (mean=6.01). In case of overall self- esteem, the highest mean score was associated with intact families (mean=27.78) and lowest with single- parent families, which indicated that among all the three groups, adolescents living with intact families had better self -esteem.

Table 1 (b): Mean Scores of the Adolescents across Different Dimensions of Self Esteem

Dimensions of Self Esteem	Adolescents (n=300)			F-ratio
	Orphanages (n ₁ =100)	Single Parent Families (n ₂ =100)	Intact Families (n ₃ =100)	
	Mean ± (S.D)	Mean ± (S.D)	Mean ± (S.D)	
General	16.51 (2.47)	16.09 (3.00)	17.12 (4.10)	2.03 ^{NS}
Social Self-Peer	4.66 (1.46)	4.49 (1.45)	4.65 (1.51)	0.43 ^{NS}
Home-Parents	-	5.40 (1.60)	5.42 (1.74)	0.09 ^{NS}
School -Academic	5.87 (1.87)	6.04 (1.48)	6.01 (1.80)	0.28 ^{NS}
Total (G+S=SA)	27.04 (3.77)	26.62 (4.41)	27.78 (5.23)	1.70 ^{NS}

Note: NS=Non Significant

The higher the score, the higher the self -esteem

G represents General, S represents Social self, peer, SA represents School academic

The relationship between adolescents' self- esteem and adjustment was explored through correlation method. Various dimensions of self -esteem were correlated with adjustment to highlight significant relation wherever existed and presented in tables 2 (a & b).

Table 2 (a): Correlation between Self Esteem and Adjustment of Adolescent Boys

Dimensions of Self Esteem	Boys' Adjustment		
	Orphanages	Single parent families	Intact families
General Self	0.08	0.34**	0.04
Social Self-Peer	0.08	0.13	0.10
Home-Parents	-	0.37***	0.26*
School-Academic	0.09	0.15	0.10
Total	0.12	0.39***	0.07

Note: *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01

Data presented in the table 2 (a) accentuate that orphaned boys revealed non-significant, but positive relationship (r = 0.12) between the self -esteem and adjustment. Hence, it could be concluded that the self esteem of orphaned boys is positively associated with their adjustment. As the self -esteem was increasing or decreasing, the adjustment of boys was also increasing or decreasing in asimilar manner.

Further, it is perceptible from the data in the above table that among boys of single parent families, there existed a significant positive correlation of general self (r = 0.34, p<0.05), home parents (r = 0.37, p<0.01) and overall self esteem (r

= 0.39, $p < 0.01$) with the adjustment. Therefore, it could be divulged from the table that when boys reported more self esteem related to their general self and at home, showed better adjustment. In all it could be concluded that more the self esteem, more was the adjustment. Along with these mentioned dimensions, self esteem in front of peer groups and at school was also found positively correlated with the adjustment, though the relationship was non-significant.

Moreover, data in the above table also furnish that the self esteem of boys from intact families in the home-parents dimension ($r = 0.26$, $p < 0.10$) was significantly and positively correlated with their adjustment. This result indicates that low self-esteem leads to more adjustment problems.

Table 2 (b): Correlation between Self Esteem and Adjustment of Adolescent Girls

Dimensions of Self Esteem	Girls' Adjustment		
	Orphanages	Single Parent Families	Intact Families
General Self	0.02	0.25*	0.16
Social Self-Peer	0.16	0.26*	0.01
Home-Parents	-	0.12	-0.15
School Academic	0.15	-0.15	0.14
Total	0.14	0.21	0.12

Note: * $p < 0.10$

Data presented in table 2 (b) depicts that the self esteem of girls from orphanages were non-significantly, but positively correlated ($r = 0.14$) with the adjustment. The general self, social self, peers and school academic dimensions also presented the positive but non-significant relationship. Thus, it could be inferred that as the self esteem of girls increased or decreased, their adjustment patterns were also equally affected and increased or decreased in a similar way. These findings are also in agreement with the finding of Manker (2011) who concluded that the adjustment level of the adolescent was highly associated with self-esteem level; a feeling of self-worth and competence make an adolescent able to adjust adequately to the surroundings.

Further, data from single parent families highlighted that girls' self-esteem related to general self dimension ($r = 0.25$, $p < 0.10$) and social self, peer dimension ($r = 0.26$, $p < 0.10$) were found positively and significantly related to their adjustment. It means, when the girls' general self-esteem were more and when girls were socially well accepted by their peer group, they reported better adjustment. Also, girls' self-esteem under home-parents dimension and in totality revealed a non-significant but positive relationship.

The data presented in the table above also highlights that girls of intact families showed a nonsignificant and negative relationship between the home parents dimension and adjustment ($r = -0.15$). Whereas, the general self esteem, self esteem when between peer groups, at school and in totality presented a non-significant but positive relationship with their adjustment.

CONCLUSIONS

- Major proportions of adolescents residing with single parent families were experiencing a medium level of general self-esteem. Whereas, in "social self-peer" and "total self-esteem" dimensions, orphans outnumbered at medium level. An equal percentage of adolescents from intact families and single parent families reported a high level of self-esteem on "home-parents" dimension. Nearly equal number of adolescents irrespective of their family type showed high self-esteem under "school academic" dimension.

- Non-significant difference was observed in the self-esteem of adolescents living in orphanages, single-parent families and intact families. But the mean score trend represented that adolescents from single parent families had comparatively low self esteem under “social self-peer” dimension. While in the “school academic” dimension, lowest self esteem was associated with orphans. Also, adolescents living with intact families were better in overall self esteem.
- A significant positive correlation of “general self”, “home parents” and “overall self esteem” dimension with the adjustment was reported by boys of single parent families. The self esteem of boys from intact families in the “home-parents” dimension was significantly and positively correlated with their adjustment.
- The self esteem of girls from single parent families highlighted that girls’ self-esteem related to “general self” and “social self, peer” dimension was found positively, and significantly related with the adjustment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to boost The self esteem of adolescents:

- Parents/caretakers should set boundaries for adolescents and expect them to follow rules.
- Parents/caretakers should be generous with praise with the child. They should focus on the positive things an adolescent has accomplished and offer specific praise.
- Parents/caretakers should encourage the child for involvement in extra-curricular activities and be extremely friendly with them for understanding them better.

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